



August: National Immunization Awareness Month

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has declared August to be National Immunization Awareness Month with the hopes of educating people about the benefits of immunizations. Immunizing your child helps to protect him or her from contracting and spreading certain diseases. Many of these diseases can be life-threatening; a simple injection or oral medication can virtually eliminate your child's risk of developing these diseases.

Although there are some risks associated with immunizations, the benefits to your children and your children's children far outweigh the risks. The CDC recommends the following childhood immunizations:

- **Hepatitis B (HepB):** This vaccination protects against Hepatitis B, a highly contagious virus that can lead to diseases of the liver.
- **Diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis (DTaP):** This vaccination protects against diphtheria, lockjaw and whooping cough.
- **Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib):** This vaccination protects against one strain of bacteria responsible for meningitis.
- **Measles, mumps and rubella (MMR):** This vaccination protects against measles, mumps and German measles.
- **Varicella:** This vaccination protects against chickenpox.
- **Pneumococcal conjugate (PCV):** This vaccination protects against the bacteria responsible for pneumonia, blood infections and bacterial meningitis.
- **Inactivated poliovirus vaccine (IPV):** This vaccination protects against polio.

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